

Amos Mursie

BRITISH FORTIFICATIONS ON PACIFIC COAST.

"England never was and never will be our friend."

SPEECH

N^o 2-

OF

HON WM. SULZER,

OF NEW YORK,

IN THE

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

MARCH 20, 1900.

WASHINGTON,

1900.

1900
(S)

76154

SPEECH
OF
HON. WILLIAM SULZER.

BRITISH FORTIFICATIONS ON PACIFIC COAST.

Mr. HULL. Mr. Speaker, I am instructed by the Committee on Military Affairs to report back a resolution with the recommendation that it lie upon the table.

The SPEAKER. The gentleman from Iowa, Chairman of the Committee on Military Affairs, submits from that committee the following privileged report, which the Clerk will read.

The Clerk read as follows:

Resolved, That the Secretary of War is hereby directed to inform the House of Representatives as early as possible what fortifications Great Britain is erecting, constructing, and completing along the northern frontier of the United States, especially at Puget Sound and other places on the Pacific Ocean contiguous to the State of Washington and the district of Alaska.

Mr. HULL. I ask the Clerk to read the report of the committee.

The Clerk read as follows:

The Committee on Military Affairs, to whom was referred House resolution 175, report the same back to the House, with the recommendation that the resolution be laid upon the table.

Indorsements 1 and 2 of the report of the War Department on this resolution are herewith submitted and made a part of this report.

Mr. HULL. I call for the reading of those two indorsements of the War Department, Mr. Speaker.

The SPEAKER. The Clerk will read.

The Clerk read as follows:

[First indorsement.]

ADJUTANT-GENERAL'S OFFICE, Washington, March 29, 1900.

Respectfully returned to the Secretary of War.

The information the Department possesses in this and like cases has always been held to be confidential, and for good and sufficient reasons has not been made public. It is remarked, however, that Great Britain, so far as the Department is informed, is in no instance erecting fortifications trespassing upon our rights.

H. C. CORBIN, *Adjutant-General*.

[Second indorsement.]

WAR DEPARTMENT, March 20, 1900.

Respectfully returned to Hon. J. A. T. HULL, chairman Committee on Military Affairs, House of Representatives, inviting attention to the foregoing report of the Adjutant General of the Army.

G. D. MEIKLEJOHN, *Acting Secretary of War.*

Mr. HULL. Mr. Speaker, the question is on adopting the report of the committee, that the resolution be laid upon the table.

The SPEAKER. The question is on agreeing to the report.

Mr. RICHARDSON. Are we to have no debate, Mr. Speaker?

Mr. SULZER. I should like to have twenty minutes on a side.

The SPEAKER. The motion to lay upon the table is not debatable.

Mr. SULZER. Then, Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent for twenty minutes on a side. This is an important matter.

Mr. HULL. Mr. Speaker, I object.

Mr. RICHARDSON. Then, on the motion to lay on the table, we demand the yeas and nays.

Mr. SULZER. Will the gentleman object to giving me five minutes? I want to explain this resolution to the House.

Mr. HULL. No; I will not object to your having five minutes, if the House wants to hear you.

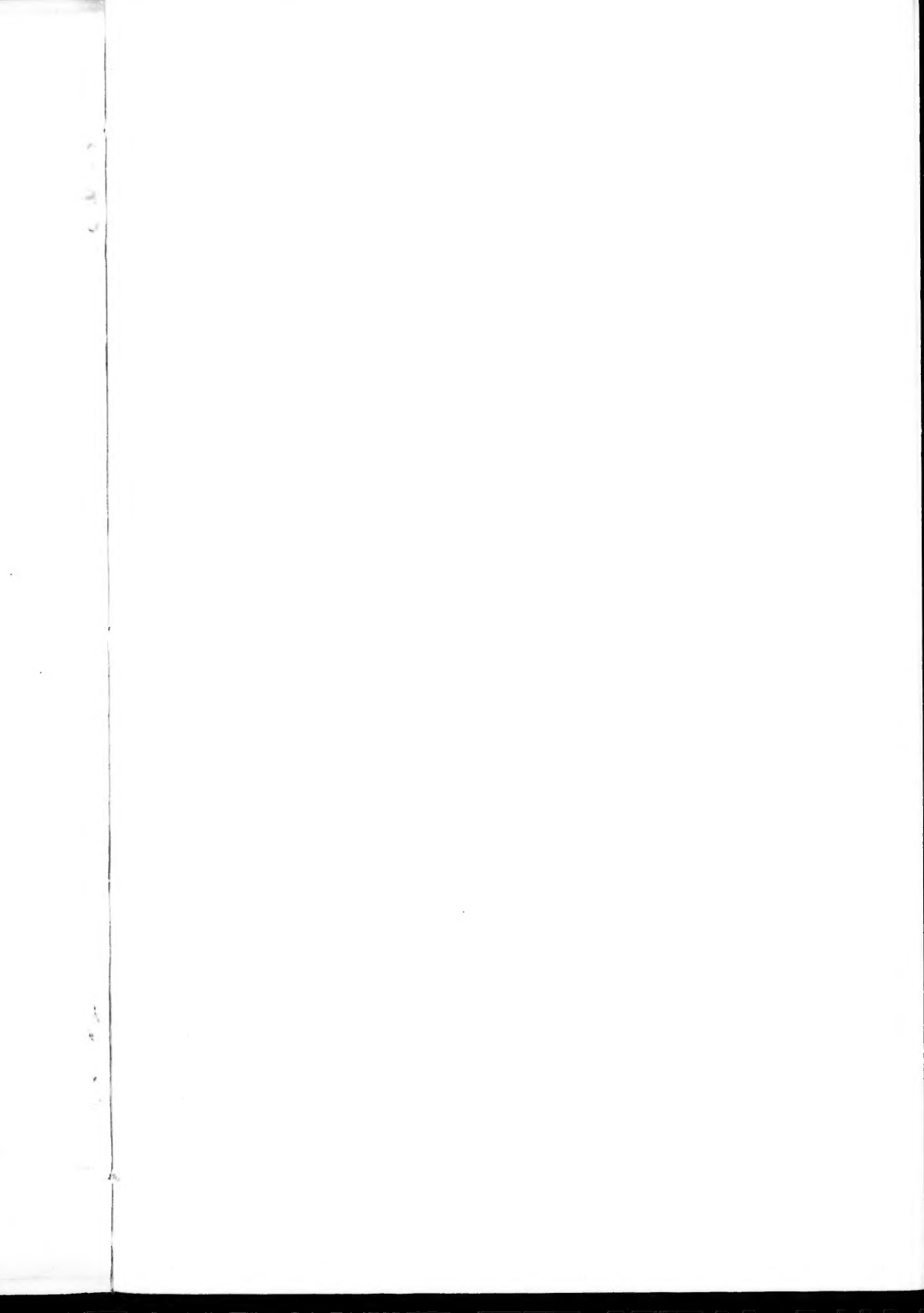
The SPEAKER. The gentleman from New York [Mr. SULZER] asks unanimous consent to be heard for five minutes upon the report. Is there objection?

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER. The gentleman from New York [Mr. SULZER] is recognized for five minutes.

Mr. SULZER. Mr. Speaker, this resolution was introduced by me in good faith and at the suggestion of patriotic people who have more concern about American rights than they have about British interests. There is a popular demand for the information called for in this resolution and the War Department should furnish it to this House, in order that we may be thoroughly informed of the extent of Great Britain's operations on our northern frontier.

There is nothing in the resolution which calls for secret information, and the answer of the Adjutant-General and the Acting Secretary of War in that regard is absolutely untenable. All this



resolution does is to ask for such information, not incompatible with the public interest, as the War Department possesses regarding the erection, construction, and completion of British fortifications on Puget Sound and places contiguous to the State of Washington and the district of Alaska. There is no reason why we should not have this information from the War Department, and no one on the Republican side of the House has been able to give any good reason for this adverse report.

It is very strange to me that the Republicans, and especially those on the Committee on Military Affairs, are so sensitive in regard to this resolution, particularly that part of it which refers to Great Britain.

That part of the report of the Adjutant-General to the effect that Great Britain is not infringing on our rights is ridiculous in view of all that is transpiring to-day and which is pretty generally known by the people of this country.

We contend, sir, and the facts justify it, that while Great Britain is pretending to be our friend and is lulling to sleep the Administration, she is secretly and stealthily erecting great fortifications all along our northern frontier that can only mean one thing.

These great fortifications are not being erected because of England's love for America. They are being erected in order to take advantage of us when we least expect it. That is the truth about it.

Great Britain's fortifications at Puget Sound and along our northern frontier menace our Republic, and on the shortest possible notice she will be in a position to destroy the property of our people and lay waste our towns and cities.

It seems to me that the Republican Administration is being humbugged by the ministry of Great Britain. To-day it appears that Congress can not do anything, and does not do anything, without the consent and the approval of Great Britain. Everything the Administration does is apparently dictated from Downing street. England never was and never will be our friend. As Jefferson said, she will never be our friend until we are her master.

This resolution was adversely reported from the Committee on

Military Affairs by a strict party vote. Every Democrat voted in favor of the resolution and every Republican voted against it. It is now before this House, and we intend to get the sense of the House by a roll call to ascertain who are the friends of America and who are the friends of Great Britain. The roll call will be a straw showing which way the political wind is blowing.

This resolution should have been reported favorably, and it should be passed by this House. It is important that every member have the information called for in order to intelligently vote on the military-fortifications bill which was reported a few days ago by the gentleman from Illinois [Mr. CANNON].

I trust the members of this House will rise above party spirit and vote in favor of American rights against British interests.

The fact that this resolution has been reported adversely, if now sustained, will be evidence to the country that Great Britain has more influence here than the American people. There is a feeling abroad in this land, I regret to say, that the Administration has absolutely, abjectly, and ignominiously surrendered to Great Britain, and that British interests are now paramount to American rights.

The Administration has sacrificed American rights to British interests in Alaska. It has sacrificed American rights to Great Britain in the Hay-Pauncefote treaty regarding the Nicaragua Canal. Great Britain, it seems, dominates the policy of this weak, wobbling, un-American Administration, not only here but elsewhere, and is now seeking to entangle us with her European, African, and Asiatic troubles.

The Administration has aided and helped Great Britain in every way in its power to crush and destroy our two brave little sister Republics in South Africa. [Applause on the Democratic side.] In fact sir, if it had not been for the undue, collusive, and unfortunate haste of Secretary Hay, after consultation, no doubt, with Lord Pauncefote, and after being told what to do by Downing street, regarding mediation in the South African war, there would have been a concert of European powers offering mediation, demanding a cessation of war, and insisting on peace with the independence of the two Republics in South Africa.

It is high time, in my judgment, for some one who believes in

American rights, who believes in American principles, and who believes in and glories in our history of the past to stand up here and tell the truth regarding the humiliating surrender of American rights to British interests by this pro-English Administration.

We will get a vote on this resolution and we will see, and the people of this country will see, who are in favor of America and who are in favor of Great Britain, who are in favor of the Republic and who are in favor of the Empire. [Loud applause on the Democratic side.]

The SPEAKER. The time of the gentleman has expired. The question is on agreeing to the report.

The question was taken; and the Speaker announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. SULZER. Division.

The House divided; and there were—ayes 94, noes 83.

Mr. SULZER and Mr. RICHARDSON. The yeas and nays, Mr. Speaker.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The question was taken; and there were—yeas 110, nays 96, answered "present" 28, not voting 116.